

Message Text

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DEPARTMENT PASS AGRICULTURE

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SUBJ: AGRICULTURAL OBSERVATIONS MOSCOW-TBILISI OCTOBER 24-31, 1973

1. ASSISTANT AGATTACHE HUTH TRAVELED BY CAR MOSCOW-OREL-KHARKOV-
ROSTOV-KRASNODAR-PYATIGORSK-TBILISI OCTOBER 24-31, 1973.

2. SUMMARY: THE 1973 HARVEST ESSENTIALLY COMPLETED EXCEPT FOR
SUGARBEETS MOSCOW TO PYATIGORSK AND CRON FOR GRAIN PYATIGORSK
TO ORDZHONIKIDZE (ON ROAD TO TBILISI). WINTER GRAIN AREA APPEARS
TO BE SUBSTANTIALLY LARGER AND PLANT GROWTH IS MORE ADVANCED THAN
LAST YEAR. END SUMMARY.

3. SNOW COVER AND SOIL MOISTURE: FROM MOSCOW TO TULA SNOW COVER
THREE TO FOUR INCHES, TULA TO ABOUT 80 KILOMETERS NORTH OREL ONE
TO THREE INCHES SNOW WITH SNOW EFFECTIVELY ENDING BY OREL AND
FINAL TRACKS DISAPPEARING ONE-THIRD DISTANCE FROM OREL TO KHARKOV.
IN FIELD CHECKED ONE-THIRD DISTANCE OREL-KHARKOV, GROUND FROZEN
SO COULD NOT MAKE INDENTATION WITH HEEL BUT BEFORE REACHED KHARKOV
COULD EASILY DIG DOWN TWO-THREE INCHES WITH FINGERS. SOIL
MOISTURE WAS GOOD TO VERY GOOD EVERYWHERE. IT RAINED INTERMIT-
TENTLY OCTOBER 28 BETWEEN KRASNODAR AND PYATIGORSK AND CONTINUOUSLY
OCTOBER 29 BETWEEN PYATIGORSK AND TBILISI.

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4. HARVEST ACTIVITIES: SMALL GRAIN HARVEST FINISHED EVERYWHERE; NOT MORE THAN TWO TO THREE INSTANCES OF GRAIN STANDING OR LYING WINDROWED IN FIELDS SEEN ENTIRE TRIP. ROW CROP HARVEST ALSO ESSENTIALLY FINISHED MOSCOW-PYATIGORSK EXCEPT FOR SUGARBEETS. ONLY A FEW CABBAGE AND POTATO PATCHES, AND A FEW CORN FIELDS AND SUNFLOWER FIELDS, REMAIN TO BE HARVESTED. SUGARBEET HARVESTING STILL IN FULL SWING WITH ALL STAGES FROM UNTOUCHED FIELDS THROUGH TOPPING, DIGGING, GATHERING BEETS INTO PILES, LOADING TOPS FOR FODDER TO MAY TRUCKS HAULING BEETS ON HIGHWAYS OBSERVED ENTIRE TRIP FROM ABOUT ONE-HALF DISTANCE BETWEEN OREL AND KHARKOV UNTIL SUGARBEET AREA END NORTH OF PYATIGORSK. ALL BEETS APPEARED NORMAL WITH BEETS IN MAY TRUCKS SEEMINGLY ABOUT 3.5 BY SEVEN INCHES. GOOD NUMBER OF TRUCKS ALSO CARRIED OBVIOUSLY SMALLER BEETS. IN FIELD CHECKED JUST NORTH OF KHARKOV BEETS IN PILES WERE JUDGED TO MEASURE ABOUT FOUR INCHES ACROSS AND SIX TO SEVEN INCHES LONG. FROM PYATIGORSK SOUTH TO ORDZHONIKIDZE, WHERE THE CAUCASUS MOUNTAINS BEGIN, ABOUT ONE-HALF THE WAY TO TBILISI, CORN FOR GRAIN HARVEST WAS IN FULL SWING EVERYWHERE. EARS APPEARED NORMAL IN ALL RESPECTS.

5. OTHER FIELD WORK, INCLUDING SOWING: BETWEEN OREL AND KHARKOV THE NUMBER OF FIELDS WHICH HAD BEEN PLOWED OR PLOWED AND WORKED INCREASED RELATIVE TO AREA STILL UNDER STUBBLE. OVERALL BETWEEN KHARKOV AND ROSTOV THERE SEEMED TO BE A RATIO OF ROUGHLY TWO TO ONE IN FAVOR OF PLOWED AND/OR PLOWED AND WORKED FIELDS VERSUS STUBBLE. FOR FIRST ONE-HALF OF ROSTOV AND KRASNODAR LEG RATIO DECREASED TO PERHAPS THREE TO TWO. LITTLE STUBBLE RELATIVE TO PLOWED AND/OR PLOWED AND WORKED SOUTH THIS POINT TO KRASNODAR AND PYATIGORSK. BETWEEN PYATIGORSK AND ORDZHONIKIDZE PERHAPS ABOUT ONE-HALF WAS PLOWED AND WORKED OR PLOWED. ASIDE FROM HARVESTING DESCRIBED ABOVE, VERY LITTLE FIELD WORK IN PROGRESS OBSERVED. HOWEVER ABOUT TWO-THIRDS DISTANCE OREL-KHARKOV FIRST FIELD BEING PLOWED SEEN. INSTANCES OF PLOWING OR DISCING OBSERVED INFREQUENTLY BUT CONSISTENTLY THEREAFTER ALL THE WAY TO PYATIGORSK, WITH PLOWING IN PARTLY OR RECENTLY HARVESTED SUGARBEET FIELDS PREDOMINATING. THREE INSTANCES OF GRAIN DRILLS IN OPERATION OBSERVED ABOUT FOUR-FIFTHS THE DISTANCE BETWEEN ROSTOV AND KRASNODAR. A GOOD NUMBER OF FIELDS THIS AREA LOOKED AS THOUGH THEY MAY BE SEEDED WITH GRAIN NOT YET EMERGED. FOLLOWING DAY, SUNDAY, OCTOBER 28, DRILLS AGAIN ENCOUNTERED WORKING IN A FIELD ABOUT 125 KILOMETERS NORTH LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PYATIGORSK. HERE TO A GOOD NUMBER OF FIELDS MAY BE SEEDED WITH UNEMERGED GRAIN.

6. WINTER GRAIN: ASSISTANT AGATTACHE ALSO MADE THIS TRIP LAST FALL. BY COMPARISON, WINTER GRAIN AREA THIS YEAR SEEMS, REPEAT SEEMS, TO BE A GOOD BIT LARGER EVEN EXCLUDING THOSE FIELDS SOWN ON STUBBLE (SEE BELOW). AVERAGE STAGE OF GROWTH IS CLEARLY AHEAD OF LAST YEAR WITH THE VIRTUAL ABSENCE OF VERY LATE OR BARELY

EMERGED FIELDS MOST OF THE TRIP. SUCH FIELDS WERE COMMON LAST YEAR. NOT MUCH WINTER GRAIN SEEN UNTIL ABOUT ONE-HALF DISTANCE BETWEEN OREL-KHARKOV, THEN MOST FIELDS SEEN WERE MEDIUM (ABOUT FOUR INCHES) OR NEARLY SO. A FEW EXCELLENT EARLY (STOOLED) FIELDS WERE SEEN AND NO LATE (FROM BARELY SHOWING TO TWO INCHES) WERE SEEN. BETWEEN KHARKOV AND ROSTOV MOST FIELDS WERE MEDIUM OR LATE (BUT NOT JUST EMERGING) AND FEW EARLY FIELDS WERE SEEN. BETWEEN ROSTOV AND KRASNODAR MANY FIELDS IN ALL THREE CATEGORIES EARLY, MEDIUM AND LATE, BUT NO "JUST EMERGING" SEEN. SAME SITUATION BETWEEN KRASNODAR AND PYATIGORSK EXCEPT THAT LATE FIELDS WERE "LATER" THAN ON NAY PREVIOUS STRECH TRAVELED AS ONE APPROACHED PYATIGORSK. WINTER GRAIN FIELDS OBSERVED BETWEEN PYATIGORSK AND ORDZHONIKIEZE WERE NOT NUMEROUS AND WERE FROM JUST EMERGED TO LATE IN STAGE OF DEVELOPMENT. WITH NEGLIGIBLE EXCEPTIONS, ALL FIELDS EXHIBITED GOOD COLR AND EVNER COVER. ROUGH SEEDBEDS WERE NEITHER THE RULE NOR WERE THEY UNCOMMON. NOTICEABLY WEEDY FIELDS, ESPECIALLY WITH MUSTARD, OCCURED BUT WERE INFREQUENT. IN ADDITION TO THE ABOVE "NORMAL" FIELDS, FROM ROSTOV SOUTH TO KRASNODAR AND TO PYATIGORSK FIELDS WERE ENCOUNTERED WHERE GRAIN GERMINATION APPEARED SO UNEVEN AS TO RASIE DOUBTS IF THEY ACTUALLY WERE SOWN OR NOT. SEVERAL SUCH FIELDS WERE CHECKED AND IN EACH CASE DEFINITE ROWS OF GRAIN ABOUT TWO AND ONE-HALF TO THREE INCHES TALL WITH VERY UNEVEN EMERGENCE WERE FOUND. THESE FIELDS WERE ON VERY POORLY WORKED CORN STUBBLE. SUCH FIELDS PROBABLY REPRESENT EFFORTS TO IMPLEMENT INTENTIONS EXPRESSED EARLIER IN NEWS MEDIA TO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF GOOD SOIL MOISTURE CONDITIONS TO INCREASE AREA SOWN TO WINTER GRAIN.

7. LIVESTOCK: A GOOD NUMBER OF CATTLE HERDS OBSERVED GRAZING. ALL SEEMED TO BE IN GOOD CONDITION. SOUTH OF PYATIGORSK CATTLE AND SHEEP HERDS WERE GRAZING ON NEWLY HARVESTED CORN FIELDS. NO DIS-INFECTANT PITS WERE ENCOUNTERED NORTH OF PYATIGORSK. A COUPLE ACROSS THE ROAD BETWEEN PYATIGORSK AND TBILISI WERE UNMANNED. LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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